

If approved by Congress and President, San Antonio BRAC Projects will Move Forward

(Washington, D.C.) - The U.S. House is expected to pass today an omnibus budget bill that includes funding for several San Antonio projects requested by Congressman Ciro D. Rodriguez. Among the projects included in the funding bill are many of the Congressman's top priorities for San Antonio - including BRAC military construction funding, the San Antonio River extension project, UTSA's Cyber-Security program, and a rail safety program.

"The \$7.235 billion in BRAC construction money included in the bill was absolutely critical to ensure that projects can move forward and contracts issued to begin construction on the BRAC recommendations affecting San Antonio," said Congressman Ciro D. Rodriguez. "Supporting our military bases in San Antonio is one of those issues where partisanship is not a factor. On BRAC, the congressional delegation has been united in our efforts to get the funds we need to move forward. Unfortunately, the President chose to play politics and threatened to veto a bill that would have fully funded BRAC. As a result we will have to use a supplemental funding bill next year to complete funding and to address the GAO's report of increased and unanticipated BRAC costs."

"As San Antonio's representative on the House Appropriations Committee, securing funding to restore the southern San Antonio riverbank through the San Antonio channel improvement project is among my top priorities," said Congressman Ciro D. Rodriguez. "We all know the impact of the San Antonio River on our local economy. That is why I was proud to work with Mayor Phil Hardberger, County Judge Nelson Wolff and the San Antonio congressional delegation in support of this river project and on the overall health and restoration of our waterways."

Among the San Antonio projects included in the Omnibus Appropriations bills are:

- \$7.235 billion in BRAC construction that allows for BRAC related construction projects in San Antonio to move forward;
- \$9.84 million for San Antonio River Authority to restore natural riverbank to the southern San Antonio channel. The San Antonio Channel Improvement Project emphasizes the maintenance of current flood control protection, the improvement of recreational and cultural opportunities, and the restoration of a natural and sustainable ecosystem along the riverbank;

- \$4 million for UTSA's Center for Infrastructure Assurance and Security to help train and increase the readiness of States from attacks on computer networks, control systems, or other cyber infrastructure;
- \$400,000 for the City of San Antonio to improve rail safety through the Neighborhood Initiative, a program including construction of a rail safety training classroom, incident management systems for first responders, and building infrastructure for safe regional rail delivery;
- \$7.475 million for VIA Metropolitan Transit, to modernize VIA facilities and develop a Bus Rapid Transit Corridor to improve mass transit to key employment centers in San Antonio;
- \$7.4 million for Camp Bullis construction of a new Health Clinic;
- \$350,000 for the San Antonio Food Bank to move to a new warehouse and purchase additional equipment like forklifts and pallet jackets to support enhanced services;
- \$383,000 for construction of a new community health center in San Antonio - El Centro de Barrio through CentroMed, which will provide comprehensive health care to 24,000 low-income and uninsured individuals;
- \$71,000 for Project QUEST, Inc., a program that provides pre-college preparatory classes, occupational skills training, job placement, and support services to San Antonio area residents;
- \$470,000 for STAR Program for at risk youth through Baptist Child and Family Services -- work with families in six counties on or near the border through their Services to At-Risk Youth (STAR) program. The program provides intensive counseling services to youth in at-risk situations and their families with the goal of reducing family conflicts, child abuse, and preventing problems of truancy and delinquent behaviors before they enter the juvenile justice system;

Other 23rd congressional district projects funded in the bill include:

- \$658,000 to build a border law enforcement training center in Eagle Pass, providing regional, nation, and international public safety training for law enforcement to address homeland security national preparedness goals;
- \$5.2 million for Laughlin AFB construction of a new student activity center and library;
- \$1 million for roadway construction in Del Rio, to complete a two-lane paved road connecting Highway 90 to Amistad Lake, including a National Parks Service (NPS) boat ramp and a Homeland Security (DHS) boat ramp at Box Canyon;
- \$600,000 for a pre-disaster mitigation project in Del Rio, to include a study of potential flooding related drainage problems and for development of flood prioritization criteria.

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